

TOGETHER, WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

SMALL CHANGES IN BEHAVIOR CAN HAVE A BIG IMPACT ON OUR PLANET!

WHEN YOU THROW SOMETHING AWAY, WHERE DOES IT GO?



BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO

YOU CAN DRAMATICALLY REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF TRASH THAT IS THROWN AWAY BY TAKING A FEW EASY STEPS:

REDUCE THE AMOUNT OF MATERIALS YOU USE, WHICH



REDUCES THE AMOUNT OF WASTE YOU CREATE.

REUSE MATERIALS WHEN POSSIBLE



RECYCLE WHENEVER POSSIBLE



YOU USE

AND THOSE

YOU THROW AWAY

BY THINKING ABOUT WHAT WE'RE USING AND HOW TO REDUCE THE WASTE WE PRODUCE, WE CAN HELP CREATE A CLEANER, HEALTHIER ENVIRONMENT.

WHAT IS MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE (MSW)?

TRASH, OR MUNICIPAL SOLID WASTE, IS MADE UP OF THE THINGS WE COMMONLY USE AND THEN THROW AWAY, SUCH AS PACKAGING, FOOD SCRAPS, GRASS CLIPPINGS, SOFAS, COMPUTERS, TIRES, AND REFRIGERATORS.



MSW DOES NOT INCLUDE INDUSTRIAL, HAZARDOUS, OR CONSTRUCTION WASTE.



DID YOU KNOW?

MORE THAN **96% OF FOOD WASTE**

THAT COULD BE COMPOSTED

ENDS UP IN LANDFILLS AND INCINERATORS.

THE IMPACT

RECYCLING HELPS TO CREATE CLEANER LAND, AIR, AND WATER, AND BETTER HEALTH.

IN 2011, **NATIONALLY,** WE RECYCLED

AND COMPOSTED

87 MILLION TONS OF MSW.

ANNUALLY, THIS ELIMINATED MORE THAN **183 MILLION METRIC TONS** OF CO₂ EQUIVALENT EMISSIONS REDUCED WHICH IS,

COMPARABLE TO REMOVING THE **ANNUAL EMISSIONS**

FROM OVER **34 MILLION** PASSENGER VEHICLES.

RECYCLING ABOUT **7.5 MILLION TONS** OF METALS HELPED ELIMINATE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

THIS IS EQUIVALENT TO REMOVING THE EMISSIONS FROM MORE THAN

4 MILLION CARS FOR ONE YEAR.

TOTALING OVER **20 MILLION** METRIC TONS OF CARBON DIOXIDE EQUIVALENT.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING HELPS SAVE NATURAL RESOURCES.

RECYCLING AND COMPOSTING **87 MILLION TONS** OF MSW...

SAVED MORE THAN **1.1 QUADRILLION BTU** OF ENERGY.

THAT'S THE SAME AMOUNT

OF ENERGY CONSUMED BY OVER **10 MILLION** U.S. HOUSEHOLDS IN A YEAR.

EVERY **TON** OF PAPER RECYCLED

CAN SAVE THE ENERGY EQUIVALENT

OF **165 GALLONS** OF GASOLINE.

RECYCLING **1 TON** OF ALUMINUM CANS CONSERVES

EQUIVALENT TO **26 BARRELS** OF OIL

OVER **153 MILLION BTUs.**

OR **1,665 GALLONS** OF GASOLINE.

OUR PROGRESS

OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES, THE RECYCLING, COMPOSTING, AND DISPOSAL OF MSW HAS CHANGED.

4.4 LBS IN 2011

WHILE THE AMOUNT OF MSW PRODUCED WENT UP PER PERSON PER DAY, RECYCLING HAS ALSO INCREASED.

<10% IN 1980

34% IN 2011

IN 2011, OVER **19 MILLION TONS** OF YARD TRIMMINGS WERE COMPOSTED...

ALMOST **FIVE TIMES AS MUCH** AS IN 1990.

THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF MSW GOING TO LANDFILLS DROPPED

FROM **145.3 MILLION**

TO **134.2 MILLION TONS**

2011

HOW YOU CAN HELP

IN STORES:

- Shop for products made with recycled materials.
- Buy items with less packaging.
- Buy refillable, reusable containers.
- Bring reusable cloth or canvas bags to the grocery store.
- Buy only what you need or what you know you will use (applies to food as well).

AT HOME:

- Use energy-efficient light bulbs and rechargeable batteries.
- Reuse plastic bags.
- Ask to be removed from paper mailing lists.
- Don't throw anything away that can be reused or repaired.
- For unwanted used electronics, try upgrading the device to continue using it. Otherwise, donate or recycle it.
- Print on both sides of paper (and use recycled paper).
- Compost your food scraps and yard waste.

MAKE A DIFFERENCE TODAY!

If we all take small steps every day to reduce the amount of waste we produce, we can help protect our planet for generations to come.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/recycle.